

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 NSC-05 EB-07 OIC-02 /072 W

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P R 141033Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7881

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO

CINCLANT

USCINCEUR

USDOCOSOUTH

USLOSACLANT

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 04640

SHAPE FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, FR

SUBJECT: US RESPONSE TO INDEPENDENT EUROPEAN PROGRAM

GROUP (EPG) ACTIVITY

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REF: (A) USNATO 0752 (DTG 121302Z FEB 76), (B) ROME 1840
(DTG 041150Z FEB 76) NOTAL, (C) PARIS 4290 (DTG 111927Z
FEB 76) NOTAL, (D) PARIS 4130 (DTG 101813Z FEB 76) NOTAL,
(E) PARIS 3688 (DTG 051945Z FEB 76) NOTAL

1. SUMMARY: WE READ WITH INTEREST REF A, WHICH IS USE-
FUL VEHICLE FOR BEGINNING EXAMINATION OF INSTITUTIONAL,
SUBSTANTIVE, AND TIMING ISSUES RELATED TO FUTURE INTER-
ACTION BETWEEN U.S., NATO AND EPG. THESE ISSUES, OF
COURSE, ARE INEXTRICABLY INTERTWINED. ANY EFFORT TO
SEPARATE THEM IS BOUND TO BE DIFFICULT. WITH THIS
CAVEAT, FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS PROVIDE OUR INITIAL COMMENTS
ON THESE ISSUES FOR DEPARTMENT'S USE AS IT ADDRESSES
US NATO'S PROPOSAL. END SUMMARY.

2. BACKGROUND: INITIAL TENTATIVE MOVES BY EUROPEANS
TO ACHIEVE CLOSER COOPERATION ON ARMAMENT MATTERS -- AS
REFLECTED BY CREATION OF EPG -- POSE POTENTIAL OPPORTU-
NITIES AND DANGERS FOR EUROPEANS THEMSELVES, FOR THE
UNITED STATES (AND CANADA), AND FOR THE ALLIANCE AS A
WHOLE. THE RATHER SUDDEN FLOWERING OF A WORK PROGRAM
FOR THE EPG SUGGESTS THAT US SHOULD EXAMINE INSTITU-
TIONAL, SUBSTANTIVE AND TIMING ISSUES THAT ARE INVOLVED
IN DEFINING OUR FUTURE APPROACH TO EPG. AGAINST THIS
BACKGROUND, WE BELIEVE USNATO'S STIMULATING PROPOSAL
(REF A) SERVES USEFUL FUNCTION IN FOCUSING ATTENTION ON
NEED TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES.

3. INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES: EPG MEMBERS OBVIOUSLY MADE
A DETERMINED EFFORT AFTER THEIR FEBRUARY 2 MEETING IN
ROME TO INSURE THAT THE UNITED STATES -- AT MANY LEVELS
AND IN MANY PLACES -- WAS FULLY INFORMED OF WHAT WENT
ON AT THAT MEETING AND OF FUTURE PLANS FOR THE EPG (SEE
REFS B - E). IT WAS NOT A FOREGONE CONCLUSION THAT THIS
TYPE OF "OPENNESS" WOULD BE GENERAL EPG ATTITUDE TOWARD
U.S., AND WE FIND IT ENCOURAGING THAT EUROPEANS HAVE
CHOSEN TO ADOPT THIS STANCE. IT CREATES POSITIVE ATMOS-
PHERE THAT WILL BE REQUIRED FOR FUTURE US-EPG CONSULTA-
TIONS. WE WILL WANT TO PROMOTE THIS SAME POSITIVE AT-
MOSPHERE. WHEN THE US BELIEVES IT SHOULD INITIATE
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CONSULTATIONS WITH EPG, WE WILL NEED TO ASK OURSELVES
WHAT IS APPROPRIATE CHANNEL FOR OUR INITIATIVE. ON THE
ONE HAND, WE CAN USE EXISTING NATO CHANNELS AS PRIMARY
MEANS FOR CONSULTATION, AS PROPOSED IN REF A. BUT THERE
ARE OTHER CHANNELS THAT MAY BE IMPORTANT TO US. OUR
SELECTION OF PRINCIPAL CHANNEL WILL CARRY WITH IT
CERTAIN SUBSTANTIVE IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES.
FOR EXAMPLE, IF WE WISH TO NOURISH THESE EARLY SIGNS

OF EUROPEAN MILITARY COOPERATION WHICH INCLUDES THE
FRENCH, WE MAY WANT TO EMPHASIZE THE CONSULTATIVE
CHANNEL THAT RUNS FROM U.S. TO EPG THROUGH ITS CHAIRMAN.
AT THE PRESENT TIME, THIS WOULD MEAN THE ITALIANS, AND
IT WOULD SUGGEST THAT EMBASSY ROME WOULD BE THE APPRO-
PRIATE INTERLOCUTOR FOR SUCH CONSULTATIONS. THIS WOULD
BE ANALOGOUS TO THE CONSULTATIVE MACHINERY THAT WE USE
WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES CONCERNING POLITICAL SUB-
JECTS. IT IS A MECHANISM THAT HAS SERVED US WELL WITH
THE EC AND COULD SERVE US WELL WITH THE EPG. IN BOTH
CASES, THIS INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT TENDS TO REINFORCE
THE "EUROPEAN" ENTITY. SEEN FROM PARIS, WE BELIEVE THAT
OVERALL US INTERESTS IN EUROPE HAVE SOMETHING TO GAIN

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P R 141033Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7882

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 04640

BY UTILIZING THIS DIRECT CONSULTATIVE MACHINERY WITH
THE EPG. THIS IS NOT WITHOUT RISKS, AS WE HAVE LEARNED
THROUGH OUR USE OF THE GYMNIACH FORMULA IN DEALING WITH
THE EC ON POLITICAL MATTERS. NEVERTHELESS, IT MAY WELL
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BE THAT THE MERITS OUTWEIGH THE LIABILITIES. IN ANY
EVENT, WHETHER NATO OR THE EPG IS CHOSEN AS PRIMARY
CHANNEL FOR THESE CONSULTATIONS, WE FORESEE AN IMPORTANT
ROLE FOR NATIONAL CAPITALS AND FOR OUR EMBASSIES IN
THOSE CAPITALS AS PROCESS OF CONSULTATION DEVELOPS.

4. SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES: EUROPEANS ARE WELL AWARE OF
CONCERNS THAT WE HAVE ABOUT FUTURE DIRECTION OF EPG,
BOTH WITH REGARD TO ITS POTENTIAL IMPACT ON LARGER ISSUE
OF NATO STANDARDIZATION, AND ON QUESTIONS OF EUROPEAN
AUTARKY IN ARMAMENT MATTERS. WE SHOULD CAREFULLY
EXAMINE WHETHER WE NEED TO UNDERLINE THIS US PREOCCUPA-
TION ONCE AGAIN AT THIS TIME. IF OUR PURPOSE IS TO
THROW DOUBT ON EXPECTATIONS THAT EPG CAN DEVELOP IN WAYS
THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH OUR FUNDAMENTAL INTERESTS,
THEN IT MIGHT BE REASONABLE TO FORMALLY TELL THIS TO THE
EPG NOW. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, WE SEE MERIT IN LETTING
EPG ACTIVITY DEVELOP OF ITS OWN MOMENTUM FOR THE TIME
BEING IN THE HOPE THAT IT CAN LEAD TO A STRONGER EUROPEAN
COMPONENT WITHIN THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, WE SHOULD CON-
SIDER EXERCISING A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF RESTRAINT CONCERN-
ING THE SUBSTANTIVE "SHOTS ACROSS THE BOW" THAT WE
DIRECT AT THE EPG IN THESE EARLY STAGES.

5. TIMING: AS IN SO MANY OF THE ISSUES THAT WE DEAL
WITH, TIMING OF US INITIATIVE ON CONSULTATION WITH EPG
WILL BE IMPORTANT. AN IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO THE EPG
ALONG LINES SUGGESTED IN REF A MAY BE READ BY ITS MEM-
BERS AS AN INDICATION THAT THE UNITED STATES IS ALREADY
CONCERNED BY DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE EPG. AS SUGGESTED
ABOVE, IF THIS IS INDEED THE CONCLUSION OF THE US, THEN
WE CERTAINLY SHOULD TELL THE EPG. ON THE OTHER HAND,
IF WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY RESULTS OF THE ROME MEETING (AS

WE AT EMBASSY PARIS ARE), OR IF WE ARE AT LEAST NOT
DISCOURAGED, WE MIGHT WANT TO HOLD OUR CONSULTATIVE
INITIATIVE UNTIL LATER.

6. RECOMMENDATION: AS DEPARTMENT REVIEWS COGENT
PROPOSAL PRESENTED BY US NATO IN REF A, WE SUGGEST THAT
IT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT OUR COMMENTS IN PRECEDING PARA-
GRAPHS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COLLECTIVE SECURITY, ALLIANCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MartinML
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PARIS04640
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760057-0353
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760247/aaaabpih.tel
Line Count: 238
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 ROME 1840
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 JAN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 JAN 2004 by morefirh>; APPROVED <28 JUL 2004 by MartinML>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US RESPONSE TO INDEPENDENT EUROPEAN PROGRAM GROUP (EPG) ACTIVITY
TAGS: MPOL, FR, NATO, EPG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006